CORCHORUS PSEUDO-OLITORIUS ISLAM & ZAID. EMEND. H. B. SINGH & VISWANATHAN (TILIACEAE) — NEW TO THE INDIAN FLORA

Corchorus pseudo-olitorius Islam & Zaid, reportedly endemic to Pakistan, is recorded for India from Delhi and its description emended.

The genus *Corchorus* L., with about 100 species in the world and distributed in the tropics and subtropics, has 9 species in India (Singh, 1988). Islam and Zaid (1960) described *Corchorus pseudo-olitorius* as a new species from Hyderabad in the Sind region of Pakistan. This species which is reportedly endemic to Pakistan (Ghafoor, 1974) is now added to the flora of India.

A plant one of us had collected in Delhi was determined as *C. pseudo-olitorius*. A critical study of our specimens, relevant literature and the type of *C. pseudo-olitorius*, however, proved that certain qualitative characters such as the presence of bracts, though caducous, spathulate sepals, oblanceolate petals, shorter style, grandular—hairy ovary, fimbriate stigma and somewhat angular capsules had been overlooked by earlier authors (Islam & Zaid, *l.c.*; Ghafoor, *l.c.*). Hence an emended description is provided with an illustration so that this fast-spreading species can be easily identified.

Since *C. pseudo-olitorius* is a natural hybrid between *C. olitorius* L. and *C. trilocularis* L. (Ghafoor, *l.c.*), it could be a substitute for jute.

Corchorus pseudo-olitorius Islam & Zaid in Biologia (Lahore) 6 : 169. 1960, emend. H. B. Singh & Viswanathan : R. Stewart, Annot. Cat. Vasc. Pl. Pakistan 473. 1972 : Ghafoor in Nasir & Ali, Fl. Pakistan 75 : 29. 1974.—*Type* : Near Hala, 25 miles north of Hyderabad (Sind), Pakistan, 22.8.1957, *B. Haig* 1068 (RAW, K, isotype !).

Erect, up to 180 cm high, annual herb : stem profusely branched from the base, glabrous. Leaves 3-5-costate, oblong or linear-lanceolate, 3-12 × 0.5-4 cm, rounded or somewhat oblique at base, serrate, basal serratures prolonged into filiform, deflexed appendages, glabrous ; petioles grooved, 1-4 cm long, ciliate at junction with lamina ; stipules setaceous, 0.5-1 cm long. Cymes 1-3-flowered : peduncles *ca* 1 mm long ; bracts subulate, 1-2 mm long, light orange, caducous ; pedicels *ca* 2 mm long. Sepals spathulate with a light pink acuminate tip, 3-5 × 1-1.2 mm, connate at base. Petals oblanceolate, obtuse, 3-3.5 × 1-1.2 mm, yellow. Stamens *ca* 20 ; filaments 2-3.5 mm long ; anthers 2-celled, dorsifixed. Ovary 3-carpellary, cylindric, *ca* 2 mm long, covered with minute protuberances intermixed with multicellular glandular-hairs ; style 3-angular, *ca* 1 mm long, glabrous ; stigma fimbriate. Capsules 1-3 together, if in 3 one longer than others, erect, 3-angular, 2-4.5 cm long, glabrous, 3-loculed, locules transversely septate, beak entire ; seeds many, 3-gonous, compressed, brown.

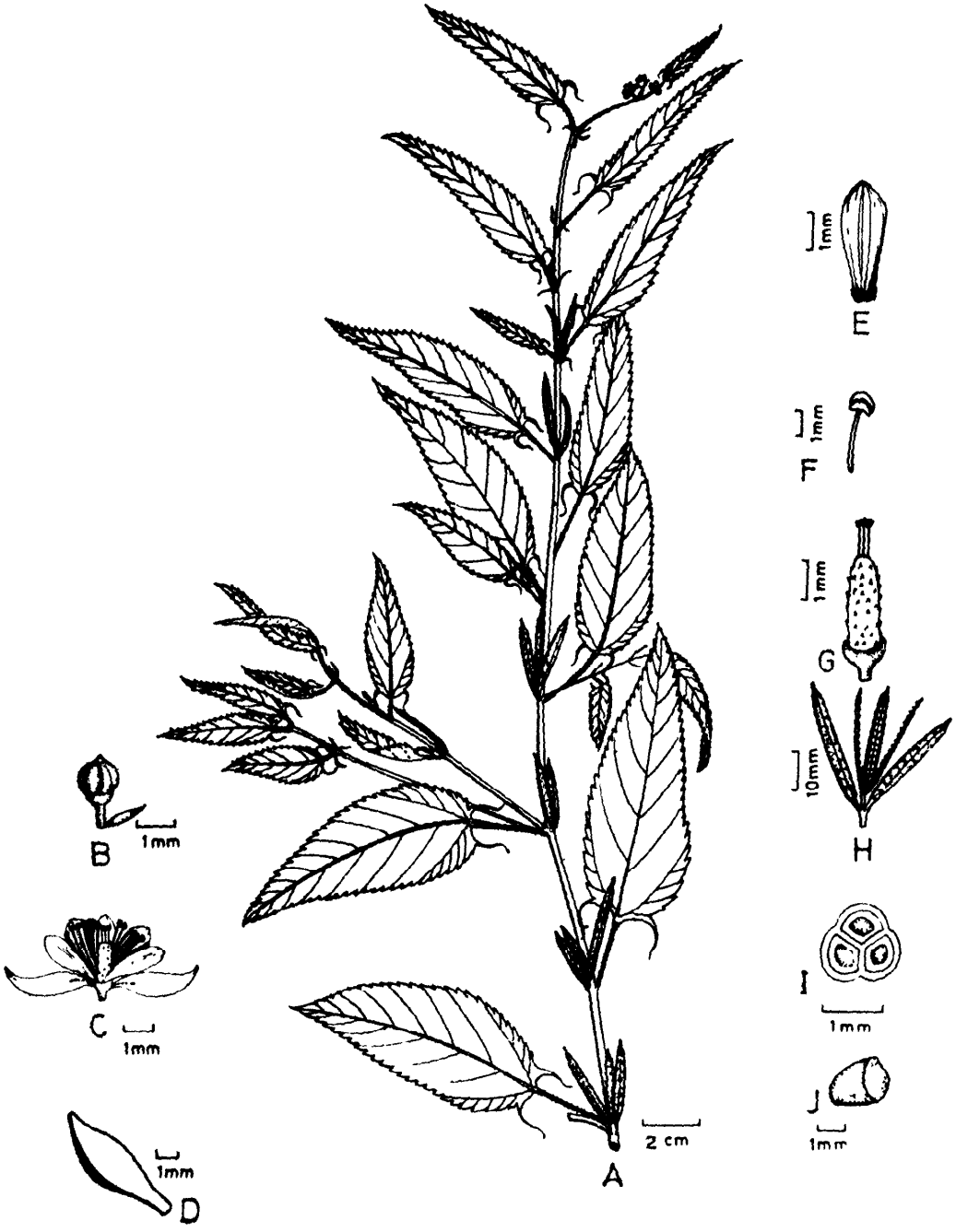
Fl. : August-September. *Fr.* : September-October.

Habitat : Common on dry sandy soil in scrub forests in association with *Prosopis cineraria*, *Butea monosperma*, *Ziziphus mummularia*, *Acacia* spp., *Balanites aegyptiaca*, *Capparis decidua*, *Adhatoda zeylanica*, *Indigofera* spp., *Tephrosia purpurea*, *Hibiscus micranthus*, *Tribulus terrestris*, *Ocimum americanum* and *Corchorus* spp.

Specimen examined : India : New Delhi, Ridge forest, 20.8.1984, *H. B. Singh* 1446 : K. S. Krishnan Marg, 26.9.1988, *H. B. Singh* 1514 (RHMD).

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Corchorus pseudo-olitorius H. B. Singh, 1514.

Fig. 1 : A-J : A. Flowering & Fruiting branch. B. Flower bud. C. Open flower. D. Sepal. E. Petal. F. Stamen. G. Pistil. H. Fruit. I. T.S. of fruit. J. Seed.

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H. B. SINGH
Raw Materials Herbarium & Museum (RHMD)
AND
M. V. VISWANATHAN
Publications & Information Directorate CSIR, New Delhi